



(U) The 9/11 Commission Report -- Hot Off the Press!

FROM: the SID 9/11 Response Team
Unknown
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(U//FOUO) The National (9/11) Commission's long-awaited final report is on the streets! Building on the work done by the Congressional Joint Intelligence Committee, the National Commission staff reached out to the public and private sectors, gathering reams of documents, meeting with scores of witnesses, and receiving many briefings to piece together its account of the events of September 11, 2001. For the better part of a year, they spent countless hours analyzing, re-analyzing and compiling all of this information into a compelling report that recreates the circumstances surrounding 9/11, highlights lessons learned (with the advantage of hindsight), and recommends new measures to improve our national security. It goes without saying that NSA cooperation was absolutely vital to this effort.

(S//SI) One of the Commission's biggest challenges was to produce a meaningful, unclassified report for public consumption using a large body of material from classified sources. This was a complex endeavor, because many of the Commission staffers, who were predominantly from academia and law practices, had not come into contact with SIGINT before joining the staff. SID supported the work of the Commission while protecting sensitive SIGINT equities.

(S//SI) Working with the Intelligence Community and NSA's Office of General Counsel and Office of Policy, SID personnel examined over 500 pages of the draft report word-by-word in under a month, identifying classified information and proposing alternative wording. The Agency was only able to release many intelligence facts in the Commission report by disassociating them from NSA or SIGINT. The final review process ended in face-to-face negotiations with the Commission staff running up to the eleventh hour. As a result of this well-coordinated, painstaking work, the publicly-released copy of the 9/11 Commission's final report is a well-written, complete story with few visible redactions and SID is satisfied that our information has been well protected.

(C) The classification review process was only one example of our excellent cooperation with the National Commission. With the support and oversight of DIRNSA, SID Leadership, and the Office of General Counsel, employees at all levels of SID, in addition to folks in [IAD](#) and [FAD](#), briefed and interviewed with the Commission staff throughout the year, sometimes with as little as 24 hours notice. Time and time again, people rose to the occasion and patiently explained the intricacies of their work, skillfully answering unanticipated questions. In addition to these many interactions, NSA also turned over thousands of pages of requested documentation, including SIGINT reports, activity logs, and policy documents, to name a few. Locating these documents and preparing them for release to the Commission involved much hard work on the part of employees throughout the Agency. The turnaround time was always outstanding.

(S//SI) You should all feel proud knowing that time you or your colleagues invested in explaining our business to the National Commission staff members paid off. Throughout the process, the Commission staff members were receptive and impressed with the level of expertise at NSA. Many times the clarification provided by members of the SID workforce was essential to making sure NSA was accurately represented to the public. We reiterate DIRNSA's encouragement (see [DIRgram-323](#)) that you read the Commission's final report, keeping in mind ways to improve the security of our nation. When you read it, know that SID was an important participant in this national effort.

(S//SI) As a final reminder, when discussing the report with people who are not cleared, please do not attribute any of the information back to NSA or SIGINT. Any congressional or media inquiries about the report should be directed, without comment, to NSA's [Legislative Affairs Office](#) or the [Public Affairs Office](#), respectively. As noted above, we worked hard to disassociate NSA from the final report. It is essential that we not inadvertently establish the link through

comment to friends, family or others. The National Commission's report is posted to its website at <http://www.9-11commission.gov> , and it is also available on NSANet at [9/11 Commission Report](#).

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